AUTHORS AND THEIR WORK-LATE NEWS OF BOOKLAND

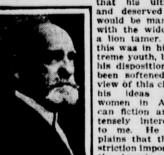
WRITERS WRITE ABOUT WRITERS' RIGHTS

Owen Johnson, writing recently in these ; lumns, raised an interesting point of soussion. He stated that he feels the pentimentalization of women has placed a lyranny upon American section and that the reason our fiction lacks the conviction of European literature is that our authors depicting feminine characters have to use a treatment different from the one they accord masculine characters, making them merely stock figures. He contends the humanization of the women in its Action, not pleading for the prurient side. but for a removal of the veil of illusion. from women and an analysis of them as frank as that accorded to men. This last point, he says, helps make for the strength and conviction of Continental fiction.

THE SUN has asked other writers to state their views in these regards.

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

I have a great respect for Mr. Owen hnson's opinion, and this is a weighty dmission, when I say that I have known him since his birth and often predicted



to me. He com-plains that the re-striction imposed on the American noveminine characters makes them mere stock figures." He means of course the very up to date American clists, who invent heroines to suit the fashionable illustrator of the moment, those gentlemen who write that 250,000 people who run may read. Mr. Johnson's own ladies are not "stock figures"—I do not observe that the Salamander is a "stock figure," and unless he has made her too good to be true she does not seem to have been weakened by a regard for overconventional restrictions. And there are Mrs. Wharton's ladies in "The House of Mirth" and "The Custom of the Coun-

try"-Mrs. Wharton might have been as frank about them as Flaubert was about "Madame Bovary," but that would not have made them more convincing. It requires genius to depict a woman as Flau-bert depicted his heroine and as Tolstoy painted Anna Karenina—when we shall have a novelist of genius in our country we shall not consider the conventions. The conventions will disappear in the

vincing"? Or Pierre Lott, for all his flashes of the sacred fire? Or Henri Bourdeaux, or the long winded "Christophe" man? Or Rene Bazin, or Paul Bourget, or that bourgeoisie imitator of the aristocratic author of "The Romance of a Poor Young Man," Ohnet, They can write, but when authors write too well they become dehumanised, and the Byzantine Who wants an Ameri-

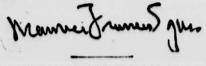
Perhaps the modern English writers are included in the term "European."
If they are Mr. Maurice Hewlett can be very unrestricted, but he is not always convincing—though there are moments.

The conventions of the English circulating "Tom Jones" is truer and more passages. Tom Johns is truer an inter-convincing, but not so pretty. Arnold Bennett manages very well, and Wells, in "Marriage." makes us forget conventions and think only of the truth. To be sure, after "Marriage" We becomes a mere essayist again.

Thackeray left us few illusions about Becky Sharp; but Owen Johnson perhaps feels that he might have been franker in his analysis of her than in his analysis of Pendennis. Allowing for the greater libetty permitted to the provalist to day feels that he might have been franker in his analysis of her than in his analysis of Pendennis. Allowing for the greater liberty permitted to the novelist to-day, Owen Johnson has gone further in the analysis—expressed by action rather than Thack—words—of his Salamander than Thack—women, the emergence and the transformation of women. We sentimentalize a words—of his saturation than hacked a good darked to go. Becky Sharp had no more scruples and no more conscience than any woman who to-day chooses the hardest way for the sake of a limousine and a pearl necklace. She took her world as she found it and what she found in it.

As for the other world she stent out the world has changed, and what is even more significant to my thinksimply see more of the author and less of their mothers ever thought.

The novelist in America who knows the truth and can express it need not trouble himself about mere conventions; but the author of the best sellers must keep an uneasy eye on his buyers, and they still insist that a perfect lady in fiction must clothes on; but who knows when their taste will change.



Thank you for the opportunity to exeress myself upon a subject I'm interested

The heroine of to-day, or to-morrow, rather, for she is just arriving, is still, it seems, un-sexing herself, still destroying chivalry, still unsettling all our nicely filed death of faceling. our nicely filed ideals of fascinat-ing femininity—just as each preceding "new" type of hero-ine did. The new heroine (must I say it? It's so dis-illusionizing), the modern heroine is not a true woman at

not a true woman at all. She is a new woman!

woman!
"She is therefore," says man, who
knows all about women, "a sexless freak
who is elbowing her way into man's
sphere in order to lose her charm."

For example, and the charm." For she exercises not only her emotions e the little Victorian swooner, and her iscles, like the Rooseveltian golfer, but mind! And that is most disillusion-

good to think. She should just feel.

A she must think let her think about
Ouerwise it's a fad.

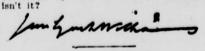
Rewena. They were just pretty assive as true women ought to be. They used their sweet, indirect influence.

The face that launched a thousand leave this topic, most vital of them ships—did that face appear at the launching ceremonies? No. Woman's place was the home.

the home.
"Therefore," says Man, "It still in."
A spinster should stay at home and spin. Else why call them spinsters?
What will be the social significance of giving woman—or, rather, of her obtaining for herself—an independent income and the consequent freedom to do as she ing for herself—an independent income and the consequent freedom to do as she sees fit instead of what man sees fit for her? • • • At last, for the first time in the history of civilization, woman is going to have a chance to act like herself, to be as she sees fit, instead of being or pretending to be what man demanded and has heretofore demanded of her. We may

Heretofore we have only known females.
They had to play up to man's idea of beings, not familiar marionettes, to his They have had no say in the matter. They had to play up to man's local tems, and taminar marionettes, to his readers. Reduced to plain terms, what had to play up to theirs? Interesting, yes, but irritating. We should have to behave ourselves. And this would mean not a mere discovery, but a revolution!

Well continue to play up to man's local tems, not taminar marionettes, to his readers. Reduced to plain terms, what Mr. Johnson combine to the plain terms, what may be a fine to his readers. Reduced to plain terms, what may be a fine to his readers. Reduced to plain terms, what is considered to his readers.



ROBERT HERRICK.

In answer to your letter of April 13 shall refer you to an article by me on the American novel in the current April issue of the Yale Review, which contains



a reference to the that my own novel method of treating (Suggested extracts

from the Yale Review.) In the first place

The conventions of the English circulating libraries hang over him, and yet they permit him much freedom. So with Mr. Galsworthy. It seems to me that his "Dark Flower," which is the second of episodes in the life of an egoistic and rather vulgar sensualist, is an example of the very frankest treatment of feminine characters, but its frankness does not make it "convincing." It does not ring true, though it speaks pretty, poetical passages. "Tom Jones" is truer and more we shall remain morally shabby-soft.

The fact that our novels are written largely by women and for the entertain-ment of women is in itself a weakening element in our literature. It would be idle to champion male literature as opposed to a feminine one, but our literature should represent both sexes. The man's conception of life ought to interest women

women, the emergence and the transfor-mation of women. We sentimentalize a As for the other world, she slept out the what is even more significant to my thinkthought of it. The modern woman of this same type could not be made more conchanging rapidly. They are thinking vincing by a franker analysis. You would differently about themselves from what

The suffrage agitation is comparatively unimportant, or rather merely one prominent straw on the stream that marks the current. Of much more immediate significance is the way in which women are being absorbed in the economic machine of our industrialism as breadwinners, as competitors of men, and in the freer strata of society as independent creators. All this must change profoundly the inner life of the sex and the attitude of men and women toward each other. The emancipation of women that the suffrage aginent straw on the stream that marks the cipation of women that the suffrage agi-tators harp upon is coming all the time, not so much through obtaining the vote as through their growing ability to compete with men in the conditions of modern civilization, and to make a strong, inde-pendent life in cooperation with men, apart from a merely sex or sentimental rela-tionship.

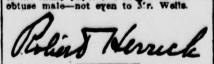
Nothing is more thrilling in our life to-day than the struggles of women to win this superior sort of freedom, to become the real equals of men. Why, then? do not our novelists, especially our women novelists, celebrate this epic of their sex? They should give us these newer women, with their changing attitude toward life and especially toward the ser relation and the family. They should no

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Mr. Owen Johnson has raised an interesting question in his recent article in THE SUN on "The Popular Conception of Women in Fiction." I fully agree with him that there are

has heretofore demanded of her. We may not like it, but what are we going to do about it?

We are about to make the greatest discovery of all this wonderful age—the discovery of woman!

Heretofore we have only known females.

They had to play up to man's idea of height not femiliar.

that his ultimate and describe fate would be marriage with the widow of a lion tamer. But this was in his extreme youth, before his disposition had been softened. In view of this change indeas about women in American fiction are intensely interesting to me. He complains that the restriction lowers in the method of the me. He complains that the restriction lowers in the method of the me. He complains that the restriction lowers in the method of the method of the method of the lowbrows. Strange, isn't it?

fiction, and the development of character cannot be made plausible where it is not marked by sincerity. Nor can a writer who hopes to persuade a particular editor to serialize his novel utter the best that is in him with the photograph of that editor on the desk before him

Mr. Johnson has struck the nail squarely on the head in his remarks upon the limitations that embarrass the novelist when he undertakes to paint an erring woman. The reading public, like the gallery gods, must have a chance to hiss the shameful creature from the stage. the shameful creature from the stage. However, in my "Otherwise Phyllis" I sent an erring woman home to the community she had left in dishonor and made a cheerful affair of her return, and I don't recall that any reader or critic has complained of it. It isn't important, but I consider that woman the best and truest cheareful that any reader or critic has complained of it. It isn't important, but I consider that woman the best and truest cheareful are the demand of editors. character I have ever done.

My publisher quoted to me recently the remark of a distinguished American novelist who said that those of us who want to deal with life as it is, not as the boarding school girl would like to have it, must "learn to live lean." We all know that painted Anna Karenina—when we shall have a novelist of genius in our country we shall not consider the conventions. The conventions will disappear in the story of Judith and Halofernes or in that of Herod and Salome. What we need and would be glad to have is a writer of genius, and we have not had one since Harold Frederick almost crossed the celestial line.

As to European literature—Owen Johnson means, I suppose, twentieth century European literature—where is its convincing quality? French literature of itime. But we are no longer as sentition has become a matter of pedigree: the best of it is, so to speak, underground. Who finds the amusing, the cynical imitation of "Candide," Anatole France, "convincing quality? French literature of itime. But we are no longer as sentition has become a matter of pedigree: the best of it is, so to speak, underground. Who finds the amusing, the cynical imitator of "Candide," Anatole France, "convincing Q: Or Peters Lott, for all his hashes of the sacred fire? Or Henri flastic parts of the sacred fire? Or H healthy fact, sentimentalism persists in our movels. We sentimentalize in them success and business warfare; above all we sentimentalize our women—both the enormous relation of the sexes and the home. One of the benefits we may expect from the present woman movement is that American women will rise in resentment and kick over the false pedestal of chivalrous sentimentality on which (in our novels) American men have posed them inanely for so long.

But sentimentalism dies hard. It is an insidious disease inherited through romance from the miasmatic mysticism of the Middle Ages. It has proved peculiarly corrupting to art in all forms, because it is the easy means of gaining an im-

I fully agree with Mr. Johnson that the caramel nibbling jeune fille is pass-ing out, yielding to her vigorous, healthy minded sister who can climb a rope of walk ten miles as preparation for uous debates on mighty questions. merely the compelling force of tradition that keeps the old simpering, clinging vine type in fiction. Tradition demands also the happy ending, and I hope to live to see the day when it will be possible for authors to send manuscripts to publishers without inviting telegrams begging them for God's sake to change the last chapter so as to leave the heroine firmly clasped in the hero's arms.

I don't think the sentimentalism of which Mr. Johnson complains can be charged wholly against public taste or that editors and publishers are the sole culprits. Those of us who have serious aims must elect whether we shall write with an eye on the spring automobile ad-vertisements or on ideals that enforce

clean living.

We continue to do much better with the short story than with the novel. We are all writing much too hastily. There are few American writers who can make any claims to style. There are second rate English novelists who write much thew Arnold complained in us is more sadly apparent now than it was thirty years ago when Mr. Arnold brought his acutely discerning monocle to bear upon American life. All round men of letters plying. This may be merely an expres-sion of our general tendency in all the sciences and arts to specialization. But we ought at least to put the best that is in us into our novels and short stories. It would be cheering to come suddenly upon new books of as excellent work-manship as Cable's "Old Creole Days" or "The Grandissimes."

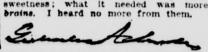
The pressure upon writers of reputa-tion to increase their output is tremen-dous. It is not easy to refuse jobs that promise impediate generous payment and

promise immediate generous payment and plan the deliberate labors that alone proor publishers that we explain the sin away, or, in Mr. Johnson's phrase, surround it "with the illusions of romance

Meres it Nichowow

ough, American women will be the equals of the women of the Old World, who demand realism, not pap. (I do not mind invoking the

Some time since I received a letter



EXPLANATORY BITS OF THE MECHANISM OF DREAMING

By HENRI BERGSON.

IT is memories and only memories which weave the woof of our dreams.

All that we have felt, perceived, thought, willed, from the first awakening of our con-

These memories, perceiving that I have raised the trap door which has kept them eath the floor of consciousness, arise from the depths.

Memory images are like the steam in a boiler under more or less tension If we dream about events of the same day it is the most insignificant facts, and not

most important, which have the best chance of reappearing.

Sounds, do not play in our dreams so important a role as colors. Our dreams are, re all, visual, and even more visual than we think.

In adream we become no doubt indifferent to logic, but not incapable of logic. There are dreams when we reason with correctness and even with subtlety. I might almost say, at the risk of seeming paradoxical, that the mistake of the dreamer is in reasoning too

To explore the most secret depths of the unconscious, to labor in the subsoil of conectousness, that will be the principal task of psychology in the century which is opening. I do not doubt that wonderful discoveries await it there, as important perhaps as have been in the preceding centuries the discoveries of the Thysical and natural sciences. -From "Dreams."



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